

Statement by Roy Jenkins on the accession of Greece to the EC (1 January 1981)

Caption: On 1 January 1981, Roy Jenkins, outgoing President of the Commission of the European Communities, talks of the importance of Greek membership of the Communities.

Source: Bulletin of the European Communities. January 1981, No 1. Luxembourg: Office for official publications of the European Communities.

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URL: http://www.cvce.eu/obj/statement_by_roy_jenkins_on_the_accession_of_greece_to_the_ec_1_january_1981-en-b829d93b-fb52-4e5f-98a9-6e301a21ef25.html

Publication date: 20/10/2012

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This is a great and historic day for Greece and for the European Community. The accession of Greece to our Community is a part of that gathering in of European civilization represented by the European idea. We could hardly be complete without the country where in the distant past so much that we now count as characteristically European had its origins. Not least of this is the very concept of democracy which is at the heart of the Community.

This is the beginning of a new chapter, and our joint task will be to ensure that the participation of Greece in the Community is beneficial both to Greece and to the new Community of Ten. It will not be easy, and inevitably there will be problems of adjustments- on all sides. But I believe that Greece will from the beginning both contribute to and benefit from the Community. The Commission will certainly play its full role in helping to ensure this is the case.

Greece joins the Community at a time of movement for the Community is an organism in evolution. We face many challenges but even greater opportunities. What is important is that we use the sense of European purpose which motivated us all in creating and enlarging the Community for the greater advantage of all our peoples.